

CLAIMS

I/We claim:

1 1. An imaging system, comprising:  
2 an image processor configured to generate image data  
3 representing an image;  
4 a storage device configured to store the image data;  
5 a print driver configured to generate instructions  
6 corresponding to the image data;  
7 an image maker configured to generate a representation of the  
8 image in accordance with the drive instructions;  
9 a first communications network interconnecting the image  
10 processor and the print driver; and  
11 a second communications network, different than the first  
12 communications network, interconnecting the image processor, the  
13 print driver, and the storage device.

14 2. A system according to claim 1, wherein:  
15 the image processor is further configured to write the  
16 generated image data to the storage device via the second  
17 communications network; and  
18 the print driver is further configured to read the stored  
19 image data from the storage device via the second communications  
20 network.

21 3. A system according to claim 2, wherein:  
22 the image processor is further configured to generate a  
23 message indicative of the image data having been written to the  
24 storage device and to transmit the message to the print driver via  
25 the first communications network.

26 4) A system according to claim 1, wherein:

2 the image processor is a raster image processor;  
3 the storage device is part of a single pool of storage  
4 devices;  
5 the image maker is one of a color proofer and an image setter;  
6 and  
7 the second communications network includes respective  
8 dedicated links between the image processor and the pool of storage  
9 devices, and between the print driver and the pool of storage  
10 devices.

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1 5. A system according to claim 4, wherein:  
2 the first communications network includes links having a first  
3 bandwidth;  
4 the dedicated links have a second bandwidth greater than the  
5 first bandwidth.

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1 6. A system according to claim 1, wherein:  
2 the print driver is further configured to transmit to the  
3 image processor, via the first communications network, a product  
4 identifier for a destination storage device at which the image data  
5 generated by the image processor is to be stored;  
6 the image processor is further configured to process the  
7 transmitted product identifier to determine if the destination  
8 storage device at which the generated image data is to be stored is  
9 the storage device; and  
10 the image data generated by the image processor is written to  
11 the storage device via the second communications network if the  
12 destination storage device at which the generated image data is to  
13 be stored is determined to be the storage device.

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1 7. A system according to claim 6, wherein:  
2 the print driver is further configured to transmit to the  
3 image processor, via the first communications network, a

4 destination identifier for the destination storage device at which  
5 the image data generated by the image processor is to be stored;  
6 the image processor is further configured to transmit to the  
7 print driver, responsive to the transmitted storage device  
8 destination identifier and via the first communications network, a  
9 request for the product identifier for the destination storage  
10 device at the identified destination; and  
11 the print driver is further configured to transmit the product  
12 identifier for the destination storage device at the identified  
13 destination responsive to the transmitted request.

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1 8. A system according to claim 1, further comprising:

2 a remote storage device configured to store the image data;  
3 wherein the first communications network is further configured  
4 to interconnect the image processor, the print driver and the  
5 remote storage device;

6 wherein the print driver is further configured to transmit to  
7 the image processor, via the first communications network, a  
8 product identifier for a destination storage device at which the  
9 image data generated by the image processor is to be stored;

10 wherein the image processor is further configured to process  
11 the transmitted product identifier to determine if the destination  
12 storage device at which the generated image data is to be stored is  
13 the remote storage device; and

14 wherein the image data generated by the image processor is  
15 written to the remote storage device via the first communications  
16 network if the destination storage device at which the generated  
17 image data is to be stored is determined to be the remote storage  
18 device.

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1 9. A system according to claim 8, wherein:

2 the print driver is further configured to transmit to the  
3 image processor, via the first communications network, a

4 destination identifier for the destination storage device at which  
5 the image data generated by the image processor is to be stored;  
6 the image processor is further configured to transmit to the  
7 print driver, responsive to the transmitted destination storage  
8 device destination identifier and via the first communications  
9 network, a request for the product identifier for the destination  
10 storage device at the identified destination; and  
11 the print driver is further configured to transmit the product  
12 identifier for the destination storage device at the identified  
13 destination responsive to the transmitted request.

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1 10. A system according to claim 9, wherein:

2 the transmitted storage device destination identifier includes  
3 a destination storage device designation for the destination  
4 storage device at the identified destination associated with the  
5 print driver;

6 the image processor is further configured to determine if the  
7 destination storage device designation associated with the print  
8 driver corresponds to a storage device designation for the remote  
9 storage device associated with the image processor;

10 the image data generated by the image processor is written by  
11 the image processor directly to the remote storage device via the  
12 first communications network, if the storage device designation  
13 associated with the print driver is determined to correspond to the  
14 storage device designation associated with the image processor for  
15 the remote storage device; and

16 the image data generated by the image processor is transmitted  
17 by the image processor to the print driver via the second  
18 communications network, if the storage device designation  
19 associated with the print driver is not determined to correspond to  
20 the storage device designation associated with the image processor  
21 for the remote storage device.

1 11. A method for generating a representation of an image,  
2 comprising:

3 generating image data representing an image;  
4 writing the generated image data to a storage device via a  
5 first communications network;

6 transmitting a notice of the generated image data having been  
7 written to the storage device via a second communications network,  
8 different than the first communications network;

9 reading the stored image data from the storage device via the  
10 first communications network;

11 generating instructions corresponding to the read image data;

12 and

13 generating a representation of the image in accordance with  
14 the instructions.

15 12. A method according to claim 11, wherein:

16 the generated image data is generated raster image data;

17 the generated image representation is one of a color proof of  
18 the image and the image;

19 the generated raster image data is written to the storage  
20 device via a first dedicated communications link within the first  
21 communications network; and

22 the stored raster image data is read from the storage device  
23 via a second dedicated communications link within the first  
24 communications network.

25 13. A method according to claim 12, wherein:

26 the dedicated links have a first bandwidth; and

27 links within the second communications network have a second  
28 bandwidth, less than the first bandwidth.

29 14. A method according to claim 11, further comprising:

transmitting, via the second communications network, a product identifier for a destination storage device at which the image data is to be stored; and

processing the transmitted product identifier to determine if the destination storage device, at which the generated image data is to be stored, is located on the first communications network;

wherein the generated image data is written to the storage device via the first communications network only if the destination storage device, at which the generated image data is to be stored, is determined to be located on the first communications network.

15. A method according to claim 14, further comprising:

transmitting, via the second communications network, a destination identifier for the destination storage device at which the generated image data is to be stored;

transmitting, responsive to the transmitted destination storage device destination identifier and via the first communications network, a request for the product identifier for the destination storage device at the identified destination; and

transmitting the product identifier for the destination storage device at the identified destination responsive to the transmitted request.

16. A method according to claim 11, further comprising:

generating other image data representing an image;

transmitting, via the second communications network, a product identifier for a destination storage device at which the other generated image data is to be stored;

processing the transmitted product identifier to determine if the destination storage device at which the other generated image data is to be stored is remote to the first communications network; and

10 writing the other generated image data to a remote storage  
11 device identified by the product identifier via the second  
12 communications network if the destination storage device identified  
13 by the product identifier is determined to be remote to the first  
14 communications network.

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1 17. A method according to claim 16, further comprising:

2 transmitting, via the second communications network, a  
3 destination identifier for the destination storage device at which  
4 the other generated image data is to be stored;

5 transmitting, responsive to the transmitted destination  
6 storage device destination identifier and via the second  
7 communications network, a request for the product identifier for  
8 the destination storage device at the identified destination; and

9 transmitting the product identifier for the destination  
10 storage device at the identified destination responsive to the  
11 transmitted request.

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13 18. A method according to claim 17, wherein the transmitted  
14 destination storage device destination identifier includes a first  
15 storage device designation for the destination storage device at  
16 the identified destination, and further comprising:

17 determining if the first storage device designation  
18 corresponds to a second storage device designation for the remote  
19 storage device;

20 wherein the other generated image data is written directly to  
21 the remote storage device via the second communications network, if  
22 the first storage device designation is determined to correspond to  
23 the second storage device designation; and

24 wherein the other generated image data is transmitted to a  
25 network device other than the remote storage device via the first  
26 communications network, if the first storage device designation is

15 not determined to correspond to the second storage device  
16 designation.

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1 19. An imaging system, comprising:

2 a plurality of image processors configured to generate image  
3 data representing images;

4 a plurality of storage devices configured to store the image  
5 data;

6 at least one print driver configured to generate instructions  
7 corresponding to the image data;

8 at least one image maker configured to generate a  
9 representation of the images in accordance with the drive  
10 instructions;

11 a first communications network interconnecting the plurality  
12 of image processors and the at least one print driver; and

13 a second communications network, different than the first  
14 communications network, interconnecting the plurality of image  
15 processors, the at least one print driver, and the plurality of  
16 storage devices.

17 20. A system according to claim 19, wherein:

18 the plurality of image processors are further configured to  
19 write the generated image data to the plurality of storage devices  
20 via the second communications network, and to transmit a notice of  
21 the generated data having been written to the at least one print  
22 driver via the first communications network; and

23 the at least one print driver is further configured to read  
24 the stored image data from the plurality of storage devices via the  
25 second communications network.

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